

New Jersey Natural Body of Water Drownings in 2016

Introduction

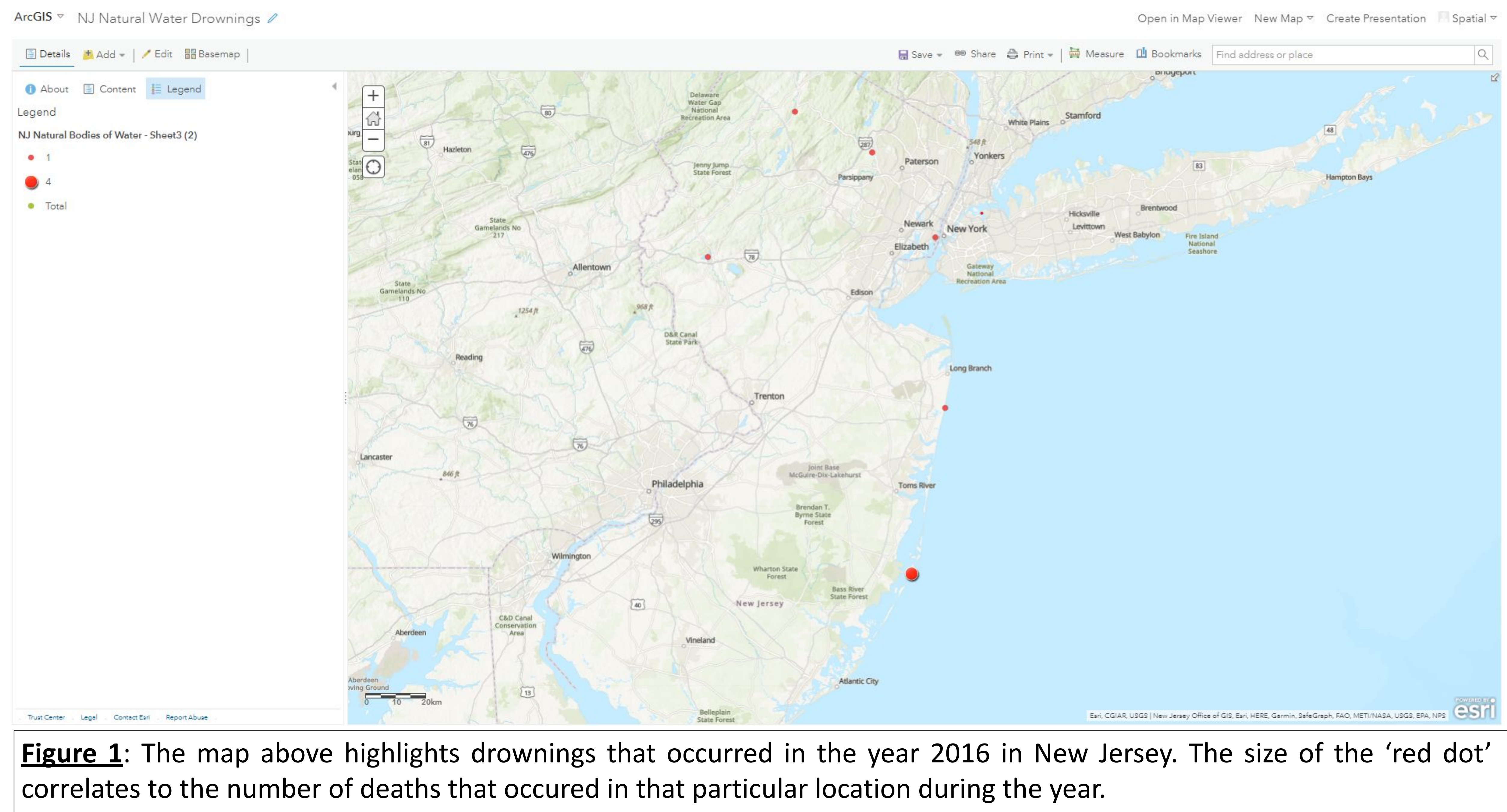
Every year people fall victim to the unforgiving force of natural bodies of water. [The New Jersey State Health Assessment Data](#) provides data on multiple variables concerning the overall health of the state including natural body of water drownings for each year. New Jersey has 9 state parks in which [lifeguards](#) are employed by the state, but lifeguards are also employed by individual counties or municipalities depending on the location to help reduce the potential for drownings each year. Lifeguards play an important role in society as they significantly reduce the number of deaths seen in natural bodies of water during the [peak](#) season months.

Data

The monitoring and collection of death records are provided by the [New Jersey Death Index](#). The location of death was not provided by this source, but media sources often included this missing information. The media sources that were located showed a drowning in Bradley Beach, Spruce Run, Odgensburg, Pequannock Valley, and Liberty Harbor, New Jersey. Four deaths in 2016 occurred in Long Beach Township, New Jersey. The map displayed here shows the number of drownings based on location in New Jersey. This map was made using ArcGIS Online by plotting the number of natural body drownings by the location of occurrence.

Results

The map highlights that nine deaths occurred in 2016 by natural water drownings. Despite these being the only deaths covered by media sources, the [New Jersey Department of Health dicated that 23 deaths actually occurred](#). The deaths that were documented primarily occurred in the Atlantic Ocean, occurring here 5 out of the 9 cases.



Conclusion

Approximately [4,000 people](#) succumb to natural body of water drownings in the United States annually. These bodies of water may be protected and guarded, such as beaches during the summer, or unprotected during the off seasons. It is important to view and understand what natural bodies of water tend to have the least and most amount of drownings. Oceans tend to have the most amount of drownings, but other natural bodies of water like ponds and reservoirs can still be dangerous. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize patterns in safety and lack thereof to prevent against avoidable deaths like drowning. Despite these being the only deaths covered by media sources, the New Jersey Department of Health dicated that 23 deaths actually occurred. Thus, it is important for, databases to collect and display more information about these kinds of deaths, locations, and details to ensure that the public is more well informed.

About the Data

The data collected to create this map was collected from a variety of 2016 news sources including nj.com, a “data-driven” marketing agency and New Jersey’s “#1 provider of local news”. Other news sources included abc7ny.com, a news division of ABC network.

The data source can be found here, in the Drew University Participatory Archive

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